

Single Parent Soldier Reunion

Reunion Phase

- Feelings and Emotions
 - Children could be apprehensive, quiet, and/or nervous
 - Observe feelings of anxiety and allow time for mixed emotions. Let them know that is normal to take time to catch up with each other.
 - Talk about new friends and favorite activities.
 - Discuss behaviors with parent/caregivers.
 - Seek advice. Schedule a counseling session and share observations with parents/caregivers and teachers.
- Community Resources:
 - Family Advocacy, Chaplains, DoDDS counselors, CYS
 - Training and Curriculum



Reunion Phase

- Preparation before parents' return (children anticipate the reunion)
 - Start talking to children about the reunion
 - Anticipate questions
 - Discuss activities (homecoming, travel plans, special activities)
- Plan Activities and Special events
 - Create handmade "welcome home" signs
 - Plan to cook a favorite food or meal
 - Plan to involve parent in special events or project at the CYS facility



UNCLASSIFIED

Reunion Phase

- Children's feelings/emotions
 - Talk to children about their excitement/concerns
 - Nervous feelings are normal
 - Help them gather "updates" and new skills they can share with the returning parent
 - Reunions are stressful for the whole family
 - Children assume everything will be exactly the same
 - Allow time for children to adjust
 - Observe children's behaviors

Reunion Phase

- Make a special effort to discuss new developments, skills, school or activities with parent.
- Maintain a regular routine/schedule (day care routine, school or instructional classes).
- Encourage parent to take some time to spend time with their child at their regular day care setting.
- Plan a special time between you, parent and children.
- Encourage parent to pick up early from CYS or take them late allowing some time for their own personal time.
- Allow time to listen and share with them changes (i.e. new haircut, friends).
- Encourage parents to take time for themselves.